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## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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**Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches**


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**A Formal Statement on Relations between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod.**—In the spring of 1940 the Fellowship Committee of the American Lutheran Church asked the Missouri Synod Committee on Lutheran Union to draw up a formal statement in which the factors should be pointed out which in the opinion of the latter committee still prevent the establishment of church-fellowship between these two bodies. The Missouri Synod committee drew up the following document, which was presented to the American Lutheran Church convention at Detroit and which is here reprinted because it shows how the Missouri Synod Committee on Lutheran Union last summer regarded the status of inter-synodical relations:

To the Fellowship Committee of the  
Honorable American Lutheran Church  
Dr. Em. Poppen, Chairman

DEAR FRIENDS:

You have requested us to state candidly what in our view after the 1938 resolutions of the Honorable American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod still stands in the way of actual church-fellowship between our church-bodies. We appreciate the spirit in which this request is made, believing that it reflects both the desire to see church-fellowship between our two bodies established and the earnest wish to do nothing which is contrary to the will of our heavenly Lord and King. Our first sentiment must be one of gratitude to God for having blessed our joint efforts in that remarkable degree which the resolutions of 1938 manifest. It is our prayer that full unity in doctrine and practice may be established and maintained.

In answering the question as to what prevents the immediate declaration of church-fellowship, we point first to the relations which, on the one hand, the Honorable American Lutheran Church sustains toward its sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference and which, on the other hand, our own church-body sustains toward its sister synods in the Synodical Conference. It would not be right or wise, we believe, that our churches should enter into a fellowship which the sister bodies on either side object to or are not willing to share. The situation presents a problem to your church-body and likewise a problem to our Synod for which, we hold, solutions must be found before we can declare fellowship to have been established.

In addition, there have arisen questions to which we have pointed in the course of our joint discussions since 1938, questions which have disturbed the minds of men in Synodical Conference circles. The first one of these pertains to the sentence of your official doctrinal Declaration of 1938, "*God purposes to justify those that have come to faith.*" The fear has been voiced that here there is implied an assumption of an interval between the creation of faith and the justifying act of God and, possibly, a denial of the doctrine of objective justification. You,



the commissioners of the American Lutheran Church, have given us a satisfactory declaration on this point, stating that according to your teaching "justification takes place, of course, in the same moment in which man comes to faith," and you have declared: "We adhere to the doctrine of objective, or universal, justification."

Next, several items in the resolutions adopted by your honorable church-body in Sandusky in 1938 have aroused misgivings. One of these resolutions states, "*We are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines.*" It has been held by some that the sentence is too sweeping, granting complete freedom of teaching regarding doctrines that are non-fundamental. You gave us a statement which satisfied us, reading, "It was asked whether it was not true that all Scripture doctrines are binding, whether they are fundamental or non-fundamental. The answer was: 'To be sure, everything that the Scriptures teach is God's Word and therefore binding.' The statement was included in our Sandusky Resolutions because Point 3 of the St. Louis resolutions could be understood as meaning that for the time being the declaration given was sufficient and disagreement in those well-known points was to be tolerated, but that actual establishment of church-fellowship cannot take place until agreement even in those points was reached. While we are ready to continue the discussion on these points, certainly the erection of church-fellowship should not be made contingent on the result of these deliberations; church-fellowship is justified and can be practiced even if no agreement is reached on these points." We noted with gratitude your assurance, expressed also in the Sandusky Resolutions, that you are willing to discuss the non-fundamental points mentioned in your *Declaration*, viz., Antichrist, conversion of Israel (Rom. 11:25), physical resurrection of the martyrs (Rev. 20:4), beginning of the "thousand years" (Rev. 20), as also the attainment of uniform terminology in speaking of the Church, in the hope that full unanimity in these points also may be reached. It is understood, of course, that, as you say, everything that the Scriptures teach is God's Word and therefore binding.

Another statement in the Sandusky Resolutions which caused apprehension in our circles is the following: "We believe that the *Brief Statement* viewed in the light of our *Declaration* is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses." It was held that by using the phrase "in the light of" the endorsement of the doctrinal content of the *Brief Statement* by your honorable church-body became meaningless. On this point, too, you have given us an explanation which we have found satisfactory, saying in effect that you consider all points of doctrine contained in the *Brief Statement* to be Scriptural, though you do hold that with regard to the above-mentioned five points the divergence you specifically referred to is not divisive and that your endorsement of the doctrinal content of the *Brief Statement* does not extend to all points of argumentation and exegesis.

Finally, the statement in the Sandusky Resolutions with reference to membership in the American Lutheran Conference, "We are not will-



ing to give up this membership," has caused some questioning in Synodical Conference circles. It was held that here the American Lutheran Church definitely stated it was unwilling to leave the American Lutheran Conference even if its sister synods refused to place themselves on the same confessional basis, both of doctrine and practice, as the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod. You have given us a declaration on this point which we found satisfactory, reading: "This is no absolute statement, but one conditioned by the future development of the American Lutheran Conference."

We are confident that the Honorable American Lutheran Church will give its approval to your above-quoted declarations and that we may be privileged to report to our own church-body when it meets in 1941 that these difficulties have been removed.

Another difficulty which in our opinion must be adjusted before church-fellowship between our two bodies can be established pertains to *relations of your church-body to the Honorable United Lutheran Church of America*. The church-papers have reported that through the adoption of paragraphs on unionism, lodge-membership, and the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures by the commissions of the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church of America all obstacles in the way of fellowship between these two bodies have been removed. While we certainly would rejoice if the United Lutheran Church of America should place itself on the foundation on which your honorable church-body and our own Synod are standing, we do not see how the Missouri Synod could enter into church-fellowship with the American Lutheran Church if the latter establishes fellowship with a church-body which does not share our joint doctrinal basis. The item of chief importance is the so-called Pittsburgh Agreement on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, an agreement which particularly later developments have proved to be inadequate.

Furthermore we hold that before fellowship can be established, there must be some assurance that with respect to church practice there will not be a disturbing, disrupting divergence. Concerning all matters of church practice, we are painfully aware that we ourselves fall far short of the goal. However, if there is to be a fraternal relation and cooperation, a certain degree of uniformity is indispensable. The chief points which come into consideration pertain to unionism and membership in lodges. It is our conviction that in principle there is here no difference between our two bodies. But the fear is frequently voiced in Synodical Conference circles that, in carrying out the Scriptural principles respecting opposition to these evils, the difference between our church-bodies is too great to be ignored. It ought to be mentioned, too, that with respect to prayer-fellowship it seems that in the American Lutheran Church a more liberal practice is followed than that which obtains in the Missouri Synod. We wish to state our firm conviction that ordinarily prayer-fellowship involves church-fellowship. With respect to these practical questions we entertain the hope that through joint conferences and the cooperation of the officials of our two church-bodies, the presidents of the general bodies and the presidents of the various Districts, the necessary uniformity may be achieved.



In conclusion we wish to thank you for the spirit of candor and friendliness which you unfailingly manifested at our meetings. Our prayer is that our joint efforts may be crowned with success. May God richly bless your convention and make it an important factor in the promotion of true Lutheranism!

A.

**The Resolutions of the American Lutheran Church with Reference to Relations to the Missouri Synod.**—When the A. L. C. from October 10—17 met in its biennial convention at Detroit, one of the great subjects before it pertained to intersynodical relations. We herewith reprint the respective resolutions. Concerning relations to the Missouri Synod the committee report as slightly amended on the convention floor and adopted by the convention is the following:

As far as the negotiations of the Committee on Union of the Missouri Synod and our own Union Committee are concerned, we rejoice over the fact that they apparently have been carried on in the spirit of candor and mutual confidence.

We likewise rejoice that the final statement of the Union Committee of the Missouri Synod requested by our committee is written in the same spirit.

This statement covers three points: 1. The correct understanding of a sentence of our own doctrinal *Declaration* of 1938; 2. several misgivings aroused in Missourian circles by items in our Sandusky Resolutions; 3. the question of our relations to our sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference and to the United Lutheran Church of America. We take them up point for point.

Concerning the first point, we are surprised that the sentence "God purposes to justify those that have come to faith" could be so wrongly construed as "implying an assumption of an interval between the creation of faith and the justifying act of God." We say with our commissioners: "Justification takes place, of course, in the same moment in which man comes to faith." Concerning the so-called objective, or universal, justification we state that we adhere to this doctrine, without excluding, however, the declarative nature of the individual justification in the moment of faith, of which the Scriptures speak so often. Concerning the second point—misgivings about several items in our Sandusky Resolutions—we declare: "Recent events prove that in the interest of a correct understanding of the St. Louis resolutions of 1938, it was necessary to include in our resolutions a statement like this: "We are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines." We declare that by including this or a similar statement we did not want to cast any doubt on the binding force of any Biblical statement. We concur with our commissioners and say: "To be sure, everything that the Scriptures teach is God's Word and therefore binding." However, for clarity's sake we add: Not every traditional explanation of a Scriptural statement is binding. The traditional explanation may not be the sense intended by the Holy Ghost and therefore may make further study under His guidance necessary; and since human short-sightedness and sin may preclude the finding or the universal acceptance of the divinely intended sense, we thank



God that it is not necessary for establishment of church-fellowship to agree in every explanation of a Scriptural statement.

At Sandusky we declared: "We believe that the *Brief Statement* viewed in the light of our *Declaration* is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses." Our commissioners said the following in explanation of the phrase "viewed in the light of our Declaration": "This phrase says three things: 1. In regard to the question concerning the essence of the Church, the Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, the physical resurrection of the martyrs, and the reign of a thousand years mentioned in Rev. 20 we accept the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*, only with the limitations set forth in our *Declaration*. 2. In regard to the other points mentioned in our *Declaration* we accept the corresponding points of doctrine in the *Brief Statement* as they are either 'supplemented' in our *Declaration* or 'emphasized as to those points which seemed essential to us.' Thus the doctrine of the Holy Scripture has been supplemented in our *Declaration* with reference to the human factor, and in the doctrines of Election and Conversion those points have been emphasized which seemed essential to us. 3. In regard to the *Brief Statement* in general this phrase intends to say that we are conscious of our agreement with 'the points of doctrine' contained therein, without, however, on our part sharing the exegetical or other lines of argumentation in every case and without feeling obligated in every case to employ the same terminology." With this explanation of our commissioners we fully agree. Since now and then something is considered as a "point of doctrine" which hardly may be thus called, we are glad that our commissioners, for clarity's sake, exemplified which statements of the *Brief Statement* are by us not called "points of doctrine," for instance, the statement that "Adam before the fall had a scientific knowledge."

The third statement of our Sandusky Resolutions that caused some questioning in Synodical Conference circles is: "We are not willing to give up our membership in the American Lutheran Conference." This leads already to the third part of the memorandum of the Missourian Committee on Union, namely, the question of our relation to other Lutheran bodies. Here we state:

Concerning our relation to the American Lutheran Conference we concur with the declaration of our commissioners, saying, that the above-mentioned resolution of Sandusky "is no absolute statement but one conditioned by the future development of the American Lutheran Conference." We entertain the confident hope that our sister synods in the American Lutheran Conference will occupy the same ground in these matters as occupied by us. With regard to our relation to the United Lutheran Church we refer you to another section of this report.

The memorial of the Missourian Union Committee finally expresses the fear that there might be too great a difference in the treatment of such practical questions as unionism and membership in lodges to permit fraternal relation and cooperation. As far as unionism is concerned our standpoint is publicly stated, and as to membership in lodges the difference is hardly so great as some fear.



Referring to prayer-fellowship, we are still convinced that prayer-fellowship is wider than church-fellowship, but we do not consider this difference as church-divisive and believe in the course of time it will be overcome completely.

A.

**Resolutions of the American Lutheran Church Pertaining to the U. L. C. A.**—The following resolutions, based on the committee report, were adopted by the A. L. C. convention held in Detroit in October of this year:

We thank God that our commissioners were instrumental in bringing about the Pittsburgh Agreement.

We accept the Pittsburgh Agreement with the definite conviction that this Agreement is in complete harmony with the *Declaration* and the *Brief Statement*.

We rejoice that the United Lutheran Church, assembled at Omaha in convention, approved the Pittsburgh Agreement and consider this an evidence of the strength of conservative Lutheranism in the United Lutheran Church in America.

We feel confident that the action taken by the U. L. C. A. will be reflected in all its official publications, in the teachings of its seminaries, in its preaching and instruction, and that such action will strengthen the practical life and discipline of both our church-bodies.

We encourage the pastors of the U. L. C. A. and of our own Church to meet in smaller groups and discuss questions of doctrine and practice in order to understand each other better and strengthen each other.

A.

**Resolutions of the A. L. C. Pertaining to Relation to the United Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod.**—From the floor of the A. L. C. convention the resolution had been offered that the A. L. C. should now declare for fellowship with the Missouri Synod and the U. L. C. A. The motion was referred to the committee which was in charge of overtures pertaining to relationships with other synods. The following resolutions were adopted by the convention: "1. While rejoicing at the progress made in the negotiations between our American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod, on the one hand, and our Church and the United Lutheran Church, on the other, as also greatly heartened by the agreements reached, feeling however, that circumstances do not now make it possible to enter into pulpit- and altar-fellowship with these bodies, be it resolved, therefore, that our commission continue to work constructively towards full unity and ultimate pulpit and altar fellowship.

"2. WHEREAS, It seems desirable to have one commission on Church unity rather than two; therefore be it

"Resolved, That the two commissions on Church unity be discharged with thanks, and that the Executive Committee of the Church be instructed to appoint a new commission on intersynodical fellowship."

A.

**The Lutheran Church and Subversive Tendencies in America.**—Under this heading the *Journal of Theology* of the American Lutheran Conference submits to its readers a most startling article on communistic



propaganda carried on in our country, which ought to receive careful study in wide circles of our Christian reading public. A few paragraphs are quoted here to show the gravity of the situation. We read: "Marx's philosophy of history, his economic theory, and his practical program are being taught openly as well as secretly in American universities and in sections of the American press. The Dies Committee has discovered that a detailed plan for introducing subversive doctrine was formulated by the International Association of Communists in Moscow. All Christian creeds were to be discredited, atheism was to be promoted, morality was to be corrupted by encouraging promiscuity and premarital relations even among high-school students, by making abortions legal, and by advocating interracial marriages. Class warfare was to be started with workers growing in unrest and suspicion; strikes were to be fomented; mistrust in the whole economic structure of the country was to be created; all this to be preparatory for a final, even bloody, revolution and civil war between the 'haves and the have-nots.'" . . . "Lately it has been revealed that there are 2,850 Communists holding government jobs, receiving pay from the very Government they seek to destroy. Just a year ago the Administration denied quite vehemently that there were any officials of the New Deal with subversive political tenets. A few months ago, when Dies made public a list of 563 New Dealers whose names were found in a list of members of the American League for Peace and Democracy, an organization so subversive that even Earl Browder called it 'the transmission belt for the Communist Party,' President Roosevelt called it a 'sordid procedure.'"

Several years ago Raymond Clapper of the *Washington Post* made the statement that the sum of \$3,000,000 had been used in the nation's capital for Red propaganda purposes. He was laughed at. Now the Dies Committee makes David Dubrowsky, former representative of the Russian Red Cross, to which Americans contributed \$17,000,000 annually, divulge the fact that "most of the money was kept in this country for propaganda purposes." "The Communist Party is almost outlawed, but that will not change the belief of the several millions of Red sympathizers in the country. They are now and will be the most dangerous subversive element with which we will have to deal. It will be found mainly among the unemployed and in labor circles. The C. I. O. has often been accused of harboring communist organizers, and not without just grounds. Be it said, though, to the credit of many sections of this organization that the local men have been cleaning house themselves, moved to action not so much by those in authority in the C. I. O. as by their own patriotism." "The most subtle form of propaganda spread in the past came from the pens and lips of preachers and professors who had fallen in love with Marx. Most of these men were no doubt sincere, motivated by a desire to help the underprivileged, but horribly in error in the belief that there was something about Communism that could afford help. Sherwood Eddy, John Haynes Holmes, Ernest Tittle, Harry Emerson Fosdick, and Reinhold Niebuhr, and others in no sense of the word Communists, not advocating Communism, were so in love with their social gospel that they began to ask whether we might not see much good in Communism and wondered if Soviet



Russia were not a great and wonderful proving-ground for a new social philosophy. Their dissertations may not have affected their own patriotism, but they certainly must have confused the thinking of those who heard their lectures."

There is no doubt that Communism is at present the greatest enemy threatening our liberty and security, especially since the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America has in recent years boldly championed Communistic tendencies. How subtly the Federal Council is doing its pernicious work is shown in an editorial in the *Christian Beacon* (Aug. 29, 1940), where we read: "The last Lord's day we heard a message broadcast under the auspices of the Federal Council in which we were plainly told that the profit system as practiced by our present-day capitalism is wrong and that it must be done away with *and a new order of service to humanity established in its place* (italics ours). The appeal was sandwiched in between the singing of orthodox Gospel hymns."

J. T. M.

**Prophecy and War.**—Under this heading Prof. Henry Hamann, in the *Australasian Theological Review* (Vol. XI, No. 2), writes: "Those of us who remember the religious phenomena accompanying the war of 1914—1918 must have expected a crop of attempts to find various features of the present world situation prophesied in Holy Scripture. Still it was saddening to read in the last issue of the *Bible League Quarterly* that has come to hand (April-June, 1940) the effort of Dr. J. E. Shelley, who labors to demonstrate that the union of Russia and Germany into a great 'Northern Confederacy' is predicted in the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel. To prove his case, he relies entirely upon those well-known 'identifications' employed with such reckless enthusiasm—and with such infantile etymology and an utter disregard of authentic history and ethnology—by the champions of the theory known as Anglo-Israel or British-Israel. He sees no difficulty in Ezek. 38:2: 'Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him.' The word 'Gog' may be a Tartar title for 'chief' or 'prince'; but we have yet to learn that there is any relationship between the Tartar languages and the Semitic Hebrew. Why not 'identify' the Hebrew Gog with the English 'agog'? As for Magog, Josephus may be quite right in his opinion that 'the Scythians were primarily intended by this designation'; and this people may well have inhabited Southern Russia. But there is simply no proof that the word Scythian is 'a corruption of the Hebrew word Ashkenaz, the nephew of Magog (Gen. 10)'; and the identification of the somewhat mysterious ancient Scythians with the Slavonic Russians is merely a case of wishful thinking. No, we do not think that the writer has proved his contention with respect to Russia, not even though he suspects that Moscow and Tobolsk are echoes, respectively, of Meshech and Tubal. Matters are not improved when the writer observes that Ezekiel describes the hostile armies as coming forth with horses and horsemen and then blandly remarks that 'vast hordes of horsemen are included in the U. S. S. R. armies is undisputed.' Of course it is; and it is also undisputed that many other peoples, ancient and modern, from the ancient Persians down, were celebrated for their horses and their horsemen!



But if our author had only read Ezek. 38:4 to the end, he ought to have been disillusioned; for he would hardly have failed to notice that horsemen 'clothed with all sorts of armor, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords,' is hardly an appropriate description of a modern army. And should one laugh or weep when reading that in the phrase 'the chief prince of Meshech' the Hebrew word translated 'chief' is *Rosh*, and the Hebrew word for 'prince' is *Nasi*, so that 'in sound, at least, a combination of the Russians with the Nazis is suggested in the original Hebrew'? Why did it not occur to the author that the aggressive Hitler is probably descended from the warlike Hittites?

"The writer next takes up v.6 ('Gomer, and all his bands') and strives heroically to connect Gomer with Germany via the ancient Cimmerii and the Cimbri. But even if it were possible to connect historically and etymologically the Cimmerii, mentioned in Homer as the men of darkness who dwell near the entrance to the nether world, with the Cimbri, who made their appearance in the Roman world about a dozen years before the end of the second century B. C. (our author commits the surprising *faux pas* of making Homer and Ezekiel contemporaries), that would not yet connect Gomer with Germany. The people known as Germans never called themselves by any name even remotely resembling that word. The name Germanus, which the Romans learned from the Gauls, is of Celtic origin and means 'forest-dweller' or, more probably, 'neighbor'; it was applied by the Gauls to their neighbors beyond the Rhine. Finally, Dr. Shelley finds it remarkable that the word translated by 'bands' (the Hebrew plural *aggapim*) is peculiar to Ezekiel and may be translated with 'wings' or 'corps'; and 'air forces and army corps are certainly the chief features which are associated with modern Gomeri Germany.' This is the very acme of futility. The word in question means, as the Assyrian and Aramaic cognates show, originally a wing; the plural, which occurs frequently in Ezekiel, means the wings of an army and, by synecdoche, armies. The word 'corps' is French; army-corps have long been known by all great modern nations, all of which had their air force for the last generation.

"There are strong reasons against the literal interpretation of Ezek. 38 and 39. We shall mention but two. With the vague dwellers in the North — Gog and Magog, Gomer, Meshech, and Tubal, not one of which names represents a nation definitely known to antiquity — we find associated such nations or countries as Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya (38:5), so that races geographically most remote from Palestine are singled out, and nations extremely unlikely to act in concert against Israel. Again, in 39:12 the burial of these assailants of Israel is described thus: 'And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them.' Note, on the one hand, the mystic number seven and, on the other hand, that, if one million Jews worked on the 180 working-days of seven months, each burying only two corpses daily, there would exactly 360 million corpses be buried! Was there ever a more complete *reductio ad absurdum* of a literal interpretation? Hence we accept the



interpretation of Fairbairn: "The final triumph of Messiah's truth over the most distant and barbarous nations is represented as a literal conflict on a gigantic scale, Israel being the battle-field, ending in a complete triumph of Israel's anointed King, the Savior of the world. It is a prophetic parable." With this agrees Rev. 20:8, where 'the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth' are comprehended together under the mystic names of Gog and Magog. Christ, the Savior of the world, rules in the midst of His enemies through faith in His Gospel; but He returns at last as the Judge of the world. One great error of the chiliasts among whose number Dr. Shelley must plainly be reckoned, is their failure to understand that Old Testament prophecy is not concerned with national and political developments in 'the latter days,' but with the experiences of God's holy Christian Church, which after Pentecost was to be extended, through the Gospel-preaching, to all nations and peoples and races on the earth. Hence every great war, bringing about great changes in the political complexion of the world, sets them on an eager prophecy-and-fulfilment hunt, which is foredoomed to failure. This holds true also of the Anglo-Israel theorists, who establish their spiritual kinship with the millenarians by their persistent externalizing, or despiritualizing, of the kingdom of God. Loyalty and patriotism are fine virtues; they are enjoined upon every Christian as a religious duty, since he is to be subject 'for conscience' sake'; but they neither can nor need be bolstered up by misreadings and misinterpretations of the Sacred Scriptures."

The last statement might be made even stronger. Such misinterpretations of Scripture are carnal and therefore sinful and turn the Bible reader's attention from the central teachings of God's Word—repentance and faith—to vain speculations, which are condemned in 2 Tim. 2:23 and similar passages. By the way, our Lutheran people are not immune to the vagaries of Anglo-Israelism, as some pastors have learned to their sorrow. The warning against this peculiar outgrowth of enthusiastic idiocy is therefore well in place. J. T. M.

**The Episcopalians Now in the Federal Council.**—The Protestant Episcopal Church in its Kansas City convention resolved to join the Federal Council of Churches. According to Episcopal procedure the House of Deputies first discussed membership in the Federal Council. Considerable time was devoted to defending the Federal Council against the charges of Communism. On the ground that the Federal Council would help to solidify the Christian front in a time of world turmoil and attack by unchristian philosophy, the House of Deputies finally voted in favor of membership. The House of Bishops after a lengthy debate concurred in the action of the "lower house." The editor of the *Living Church*, Oct. 23, 1940, reports: "After nearly 20 years of debate the Episcopal Church has at last voted to become a full member of the Federal Council. So be it; since we have decided to accept membership, let us take our membership seriously and make every effort to cooperate with our fellow-Christians through this agency in all constructive united efforts of a social, moral, and philanthropic nature, at the same time exercising care not to compromise in any way the Catholic



character of our own Church or to permit it to be submerged in a pan-Protestantism."

Virtually all the large Protestant bodies are now members of the Federal Council with the exception of the Synodical Conference, American Lutheran Conference (the U. L. C. A. is a consultative member), and the Southern Baptist Convention.

F. E. M.

**The Library of Westminster Seminary.**—According to a recent article in the *Presbyterian Guardian*, official organ of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which was founded as the result of the Machen episode, the seminary of this denomination, which is now only eleven years old, received a gift of \$10,000 for its library. This library already numbers 15,000 volumes, and the aim is not only to have it serve as a working library for the average undergraduate but also as a research library for those who have been endowed with talents for advanced theological scholarship. One of the great sets in the field of research which will be purchased by Westminster Library is the *Patrologia*, of Migne, admittedly one of the greatest accumulations of source material on the market today. The Pritzlaff Memorial Library of Concordia Seminary is still in hopes of being able to serve its constituents in a similar manner.

P. E. K.

**The Bible Presbyterian Church Prospers Despite Persecution.**—“There is more interest in the testimony of the Bible Presbyterian Church today than there ever has been,” comments the *Christian Beacon* (Oct. 10, 1940) editorially as it reviews the four years' struggle of this small but vigorous and valiant church group. In the editorial we are told that the *Christian Beacon* is not the official organ of the Bible Presbyterian Synod; only, “its editor is a member of that fellowship and rejoices in its testimony.” Of the organization of the denomination the editorial says: “The Bible Presbyterian Synod was established in 1937. The First General Synod met and adopted the constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church in 1938. The doctrinal standard of the Church is the Bible. The subordinate standards are the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. The government is Presbyterian, with sessions, presbyteries, and synods. There are several distinctive improvements. The association is one of mutual love and confidence. A particular church may withdraw from the association at any time for reasons which seem sufficient to itself. A particular church also owns in its own name and right all the property, and it does not revert to the presbytery or a higher judicatory. This takes away from the General Synod the so-called ‘property club,’ which is used today by unscrupulous church leaders and unethical church courts to ‘hold people in line.’ Certainly Jesus Christ does not hold people in line in such a way.”

Outside the fact that the basis of congregational representation in the presbytery and the general synod was made more representative and proportionate, no changes were made in the orthodox Presbyterian tradition. In the “ordination vows” the question now reads: “Do you promise subjection to your brethren as is taught in the Word of God?” instead of: “Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?”



which latter phrase was regarded as ambiguous and so subject to misinterpretation. In chapter XXXIII, which treats of the Last Things, section 1, which reads: "God hath appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ," was supplemented by a parenthesis reading: "which word in Scripture in reference to the last things represents a period of time of more than a thousand years, commencing with the visible, personal, and premillennial return of Christ." These words are placed in parentheses because, as the editorial explains, "In making these changes that clarify the teaching of the Confession, the Bible Presbyterian Synod did so recognizing that the particular views which one may hold concerning the return of Christ are not considered a part of the system of doctrine to which a man must subscribe in his ordination vows (italics ours). Rather than have a confession which possibly teaches portions of three different, contradictory, views, the Synod decided to clarify the confession and bring it in line with the most generally accepted view among the brethren and permit full liberty for Christian brethren who may hold a view which is not inconsistent with the system of doctrine and the supernaturalism of the Gospel." That is to say: Bible Presbyterians are willing to tolerate such as do not hold premillennial views, though they themselves are believers in the millennium. Their interpretation of the term "day," however, is not Scriptural, and by adding the parenthesis to the section they concede that they go beyond the original faith of Presbyterianism, which by no means was premillennialistic. Machen some years ago showed beyond a doubt that amillenarianism, to which he personally subscribed, was held consistently by the founding fathers of the Presbyterian Church.

J. T. M.

**Presbyteriana.**—Almost the entire "Fall Number" (Vol. 11, No. 1) of *Christianity Today* is devoted to a keen and thorough analysis of issues considered by the general assemblies of the Northern and Southern Presbyterians (Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.; Presbyterian Church in the U. S.), the former having been convened in Rochester, N. Y., May 23, 1940, and the latter in Chattanooga, Tenn., May 16. Commenting on the first-mentioned convention, *Christianity Today* remarks editorially: "While it would seem that the negotiations being carried on with the Episcopal Church are leading to a better knowledge of both churches—their theology, history, and traditions—on the part of the members of each Church and so leading to a closer and more sympathetic relation between the two denominations, there would seem to be no good reason to expect—and apparently it is not expected by the department—that anything like an organic union between these two churches is imminent. The indications are that the Episcopal General Convention at its meeting to be held in Kansas City, Mo., will take no definite action on the matter." This prognosis was correct, for substantially the Anglicans did not come a step nearer the Presbyterians when recently they met at Kansas City.

A requested reaffirmation of "five points" by the Presbytery of Arkansas was cleverly shelved by the assembly, which was under the moderatorship of an Auburn Affirmationist. The "five points" included the inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth of our Lord, the vicarious



atonement, Christ's bodily resurrection and ascension, the reality of Christ's miracles. The first paragraph reads: "It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that the Holy Spirit did so inspire, guide, and move the writers of the Holy Scripture as to keep them from error." The article is indeed vague and indefinite, and yet even so it did not please the Presbyterian Liberals.—The paragraphs adopted against the "Vatican Appointment" are severe and decisive: "We are anxious that the independence of Church and State shall be maintained. We resent as citizens any intrusion by the Church into the sphere of responsibility and service of the State, and we equally resent, as churchmen, any intrusion by the State into the realm of the Church."—Regarding the seminaries, the Assembly decided that three smaller seminaries of the denomination in the Middle West shall be combined, as also two on the West Coast.

An affirmation of the Committee was adopted which reads: "The Committee cannot close its report without registering its profound conviction that the work of the ministry has an importance never before equaled; that there is a growing realization throughout the world that civilization must crack unless religion takes its rightful place in the affairs of men and nations, and therefore the need for a highly trained, intelligent, and devoted leadership in the Presbyterian Church of the U. S. A. is paramount to all others." *Christianity Today* rejoices in the fact that Brunner's place at Princeton is now taken by Dr. J. E. Kuizenga, professor of Apologetics and Ethics at the seminary for the last ten years, and Dr. H. T. Kerr, formerly of Louisville Theological Seminary, who has been chosen as associate professor of theology.—Most interesting are the "Concluding Observations," which *Christianity Today* appends to its report on the convention. We read: "We have been confirmed in our belief that the size of the Assembly should be reduced. It is altogether too large for a deliberative body. At the same time, we do not believe that the size of the Assembly would be so serious a matter if the presbyteries would stop sending men to the Assembly merely because it is their turn to go, without any consideration of their fitness to serve as commissioners. As a result of this practice many of them are lacking in ability or experience to such a degree that they are not qualified to deal wisely and effectively with the matters presented. However, matters would not be so bad, despite the number and lack of experience of so many of the commissioners, if the docket were arranged so as to provide for more time for discussion. It is difficult to resist the thought that in recent years the docket of the Assembly has been deliberately arranged so as to discourage, if not to preclude, discussion in the interest of having the commissioners rubber-stamp the proposals presented to them by the 'powers that be.' Think of the amount of the time of the Assembly that is consumed in the presentation of gavels, in listening to speeches by fraternal delegates and board secretaries and the reading of reports (already in print) by the chairman of the standing committees and heads of departments. In this connection think also of the time consumed each morning (45 minutes) with the 'devotional service,' a large part of which is taken up with a more or less worth-while sermon or address. We believe that the Assembly



should be opened with prayer and be pervaded throughout by a prayerful spirit, as in the case, for instance, of the Southern Assembly; but we do not believe that there is any adequate justification for spending so much of the best time of the mornings of the Assembly in this way. What is more, it seems to us, there should be fewer extra-Assembly meetings — breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, popular meetings in the interest of the boards, and such like. A commissioner who attends any large proportion of these extra-Assembly meetings can hardly be in a condition, physically or mentally, to do what he is sent to the Assembly to do, namely, 'to consult, vote, and determine on all things that may come before that body, according to the principles and constitution of this Church and the Word of God.' It would be much better, it seems to us, if our Assembly followed the example of the Southern Presbyterian Assembly in having an evening as well as a morning and an afternoon session. If this were done and the time of the Assembly employed to better advantage, we believe that the meetings of the Assembly would take on a value and significance which they do not now possess."

J. T. M.

**News Flashes.**—*Christianity Today* offers in each number news brevities under the title "News in Nutshells," of which some may interest our own readers. Mrs. Joseph Koltay, who has done useful missionary work among the Gypsies in Hungary, has translated the four gospels into the Gypsy language, and is now making the final revision of the translated text. This is not a new venture, since such translations have been attempted before; but it is a new effort to place into the hands of the Hungarian Gypsy a translation of the gospels which is up to date. Even in times of war the King's business must go on.—As the result of a survey conducted by the Episcopalian publication the *Living Church* 68 per cent. of the clergy and 65 per cent. of the laity among the 1,200 clergymen and 1,200 laymen who received the query and replied, voiced disapproval of the proposed concordat now before the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches, though many approved continuance of the negotiations.—Headquarters of the British Missionary Society in London were destroyed in a bomb attack on September 10.—An admirable example of sacrificial giving has been set by the London Missionary Society, which recently declared: "Our deficit is now 10,365 pounds, and money is scarce. We will reinforce the Free Church of Finland in North India, the Paris Missionary Society in Madagascar, the Berlin Missionary Society in Africa, and our work in West China. Four good men shall go. We defy the deficit and will spend an extra 1,300 pounds." Certainly an excellent Christian spirit!—The United States Government has taken over the buildings of Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N. Y., for the establishment of the largest National Youth Administration training center in the State of New York. Auburn Seminary was once an orthodox Presbyterian Seminary, founded in 1819. When it became liberal, students ceased to attend it, and when, a short time ago, Auburn Theological Seminary was united with Union Theological Seminary, its ancient and venerable halls stood empty and forsaken—a symbol of the deadening blight of murderous Modernism.—In response to a request as to whether atheists would be allowed to hold office in the State,



Attorney General Harry McMillan of North Carolina handed down the opinion: "All persons who shall deny the being of Almighty God shall be disqualified to hold public office."—Presbyterian First Church in Pittsburgh, Pa., boasts a richly cut Geneva street pulpit. On Sunday evenings in the early summer, when the weather permits, a brief service is held at 7:30 before the regular 8 o'clock service. The church organ is broadcast by amplifiers, and the full church choir sings from the steps of the church. A large congregation usually gathers on the steps and in the area in front of the church and also on the sidewalks across the street and on the corners below and above. On patriotic occasions Dr. Macartney, pastor of the church, speaks at noon from the street pulpit. The first sermon was preached on the text: "Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets," Prov. 1:20. Since then Dr. Macartney has preached from the street pulpit on such topics as: "What Must I Do to be Saved?" "Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By"; "The Precious Blood of Jesus Christ"; "Choose Life or Death." Perhaps there is a suggestion in this for some of our own churches in or near the centers of large cities, where listeners may be attracted.—The Evangelical and Reformed Church at its meeting in Lancaster, Pa., completed the organic union of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States. The combined denomination has 2,478 ministers and 2,878 churches, with a communicant membership of 680,000.

J. T. M.

**Where Should Correction Begin?**—Sad and distressing are the moral conditions in the world in general. Statistics show that in the United States alone two major crimes are committed every minute. But in mentioning this, we Christians dare not forget that all is not well within the Church itself. A late bishop of the Episcopal Church in Chicago described his diocese as follows: "Two thirds of our nominal communicants are only marginal churchmen. Doubtless many of these are what would be called good people, moved by generous impulses, feeling at times a faint mystical hankering after a higher life, and greatly frightened when sickness or death threatens them—but scratch their beliefs, and what do you find? The faith of the Church? No. Instead—a pathetic farrago of sentimentality, skepticism, and superstition. Observe their conduct, and what do you discover? A thoroughgoing worldliness, untouched apparently by the spirit of the Crucified. Look for them in church: they are there only on state occasions or social occasions, when it pleases them to join in weddings or funerals or the Easter parade, and they are there not as penitents but as patrons, not as adoring worshipers but as critical auditors." This is certainly an appalling indictment. We are confident that conditions are not as bad as this in any of our churches. But, after all, our congregations, especially those in the large cities, are not entirely immune from these evils, and lest they increase, the watchmen in Zion should think upon means of aggressive action against all insidious and subtle evils which would invade the flocks committed to their charge. The Government is thinking upon defending its people and is preparing against aggression. But far more important than anything which these governments can do is that duty of which the apostle spoke to the elders of Ephesus: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and



to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," Acts 20:28. In this connection we are also reminded of the word of God to Ezekiel: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel. Therefore hear the word at My mouth and give them warning from Me," Ezek. 3:17. The Good Shepherd gives us His example to follow: "I will seek that which was lost and bring again that which was driven away and will bind up that which was broken and will strengthen that which was sick," Ezek. 34:16. M. S. S.

**Community Churches a Disappointment.**—The history of community churches in most Southern communities is the same. Some one who has been up North and encountered one decides to organize a community church in some area not well served by denominations. A good number of people join, for denominational allegiance is increasingly brittle in persons under 40. The church grows and begins to attract attention. At first it is served by various ministers, but then one is called regularly, though not for full time. Although most of the members are Methodists or Baptists, ministers of those churches will not serve. So the minister comes from some less known denomination, usually Presbyterian or Congregationalist, rarely Disciples or Episcopalian. Church officials begin casting envious eyes on the church and arrange to give it regular services of their own brand. Many persons thus become Methodists and disappear into some near-by circuit. Most denominational leaders resent community churches and dislike the ministers serving them. They make it inconvenient for their clergy to serve them, and if that does not work, they move them. The community church then relapses into a Sunday-school and soon dissolves.

*Christian Century* (Correspondence)

**Aus Nilsens Leben.** In dem deutsch-methodistischen Blatt „Der Christliche Apologete“ bietet Dr. Bischof emeritus F. L. Nilsen den Lesern kurze, packende Skizzen aus seinem Leben unter dem allgemeinen Titel „Gottes Walten in meinem Leben“. Im dritten Aufsatz, „Meine Lehrtätigkeit“, findet sich ein Paragraph, worin sich ein wichtiger Wink zu Ruh unserer eigenen Lehrerschaft, vor allem der theologischen, findet. Wir geben zunächst den interessanten Paragraphen wieder: „Wie ich bei meiner Arbeit im Lehrzimmer und den vielen Sonntagsbesuchen in den Gemeinden der ganzen Konferenz noch Zeit fand zu theologischer Arbeit, ist mir heute noch ein Rätsel, zumal das College [St. Paul's College, St. Paul Park, Minn.] nur über eine ganz magere Bibliothek verfügte. Wenn wir Lehrer Wünsche nach Neuanschaffung teurer Werke geltend machten, erhielten wir die klassische Antwort: ‚Wir haben doch gedacht, daß unsere Professoren gelehrte Männer sind und nicht immer wieder neue Bücher brauchen.‘ Doch stellte ich in diesen zwei Jahren eine theologische Preisarbeit fertig, die von der Fakultät vom Drew Seminary mit der Verleihung einer Foreign Fellowship belohnt wurde, was es mir möglich machte, das folgende Jahr nach Deutschland zu reisen und an den Universitäten Berlin und Halle zu studieren. Ich trieb Hebräisch unter Professor Kaufsch und Aethyrisch unter Eberhard Schrader, wurde aber besonders gefesselt und tiefgehend beeinflusst durch die dogmatischen und ethischen Vorlesungen von Martin Kähler, der mich öfters zu sich einlud und geduldig und ausführlich auf meine Fragen einging. Aus den Vorlesungen des Philosophen



Friedrich Paulsen hat sich mit eine Äußerung unbergänglich eingepreßt. Sie steht mir heute im Licht der neuesten Ereignisse noch wahrheitsmächtiger vor Augen. Als er die Ethik des Evangeliums behandelte, ließ er die Bemerkung fallen: „Ein Mann wie unser Moltke, dessen Lebensaufgabe darin aufgeht, Schlachtenpläne zu entwerfen, hat keinen Platz in dem Evangelium Jesu.“ Das war vor fünfzig Jahren. Hätte Paulsen heute dies gesagt, so wäre er in ein Konzentrationslager gesteckt und dort wohl erschossen worden.“

Die letzten Sätze sind uns nicht ganz klar, besonders deswegen nicht, weil Moltke persönlich ein Christ war und die „Ethik des Evangeliums“ in seinem Denken und Leben recht wohl zur Anwendung brachte. Man kann eben zu gleicher Zeit ein sehr „ethischer“ Christ und ein gewaltiger Schlachtenlenker sein, wie dies ja auch Gustav Adolf, der große Schwedenkönig, klar bewiesen hat. Doch um den Ausspruch des Philosophen Paulsen ist es uns hier nicht zu tun. Was uns interessiert, ist, daß Nüssen zur rechten Zeit die Gelegenheit geboten wurde, auf deutschen Universitäten Theologie, Philosophie und Linguistik zu studieren. Darauf mag sich Nüssens ganze tiefere theologische Einstellung zurückführen lassen, die ihn an diesem Punkt von vielen seiner methodistischen Bischofsgegnossen unterscheidet, denen zumeist theologische Tiefe und Gründlichkeit terra incognita ist. In seiner 13. Auflage des Luthardt'schen Kompendiums der Dogmatik kennzeichnet Robert Zelle Martin Kähler nebst Hermann Cremer als einen der „großen Biblisten des ausgehenden 19. Jahrhunderts“, die theologisch in den Fußstapfen J. L. Ved's wandelten. Diese Kennzeichnung ist berechtigt, wenn auch Kähler, ebenso wenig wie Ved, pure biblische Theologie lehrte. Immerhin vertrat Kähler eine mehr positive Richtung, die auf Nüssen offenbar segensreich eingewirkt hat. In Nüssens Schriften findet sich nicht nur theologische Tiefe, sondern auch ein positives theologisches Bewußtsein mit strenger Betonung der christlichen Zentrallehren. Daneben findet sich bei ihm wirkliche Seelen- und Geistesgröße, die es ihm ermöglichte, die Methodistenkirche in Deutschland, in der Schweiz und in benachbarten Ländern so zu organisieren, daß ihr das Prärogativ einer „evangelischen“ Kirche im vollen Sinne des Wortes eingeräumt wurde. Dies erkennen wir an, obwohl wir seine methodistischen Sonderlehren durchaus verwerfen. J. L. M.

**The Founder of the Emanuel Movement Died.** — From the religious press we learn that on July 19 Dr. Elwood Worcester, an Episcopalian minister, died. His church was Emanuel Congregation in Boston. Writing about the Emanuel Movement, the editor of the *Lutheran* says: “The Emanuel Movement excited great interest for a time, beginning in the early part of this century. It was a combination of religion, psychology, and pastoral personality which arose in Boston. Dr. Worcester, for years pastor of a down-town church in Philadelphia, had accepted the call of Emanuel Congregation in Boston, and in the course of his parish visiting found the combination of physical illness, mental depression, and spiritual helplessness which every minister of the Gospel meets in his work in the homes of his parishioners. To the three illnesses above cited were added in some instances the handicaps of extreme poverty. . . . The Emanuel Movement never got far beyond its proponent, Dr. Worcester. He made no claims for it (in so far as we can remember) that exceeded the possibilities of proper physical, mental, and spiritual ministrations. He did emphasize food for the hungry and medical examination, so that physical influences and grace obtained by the prayers of believers had that on which to work. We suspect also



that Dr. Worcester had some unique quality in his own personality that made him a convincing teacher and adviser." From a sermon which Dr. Worcester published about fifteen years ago we gleaned that he was a thoroughgoing Modernist, denying the physical resurrection of our Lord.

A.

**Rome and the Principle of Separation of Church and State.**—Americans are proud of the fact that their nation is dedicated to the principle that Church and State should be separate. The Roman Catholic Church has opposed this principle. Nowadays we are often told that we misunderstand the Roman Catholic position and that it by no means condemns such separation. In the *Christian Century* of July 31 Harold Bosley of Baltimore writes an article with the caption "Is a Religious Storm Brewing?" He discusses the Roman Catholic attitude and in the course of his remarks writes as follows:

"The strongest possible criticism of the American principle is the approved Catholic position as developed by Fathers Ryan and Millar in their interpretation, in the book *The State and the Church*, of the papal encyclical already referred to: 'The State should officially recognize the Catholic religion as the religion of the commonwealth; accordingly it should invite the blessing and ceremonial participation of the Church for certain important public functions, as the opening of legislative sessions, the erection of public buildings, etc., and delegate its officials to attend certain of the more important festival celebrations of the Church; it should recognize and sanction the laws of the Church; and it should protect the rights of the Church and the religious as well as the other rights of the Church's members.' (P. 34.) But what of other religions? Will they be tolerated? I quote again: 'If these are carried on within the family or in such an inconspicuous manner as to be an occasion neither of scandal nor of perversion to the faithful, they may properly be tolerated by the State.' (P. 35.) This is the clear answer of this authoritative Catholic publication."

It may be that individual Catholics have declared themselves in favor of separation of Church and State, but that the Roman Catholic Church as such has opposed this principle should not be disputed.

A.

**In Support of Scripture Truth.**—In a recent issue (Sept. 14) the *Sunday-school Times* offers two interesting news items supporting in an indirect way Mosaic records in the Book of Genesis. The first reads: "W. W. Skeat, formerly of the British Museum, writing in the July-September number of the *Bible League Quarterly*, speaks of remarkable archeological finds relating to Gen. 2:8. The word 'Eden' means simply 'plain' in the original Sumerian. It was, in fact, the name of the great Babylonian Plain of Shinar, or Sumer, which existing Sumerian inscriptions give as 'Edin.' Thus a baked clay tablet (No. 17,751), inscribed about 2,500 B. C. during the reign of Dungi, was found to contain a record of the grain stored in various granaries. One of the records ran as follows: *Nidub a-kaka sir-bi Edin-na(ki)*, which means 'Granary of the Smiting of the Serpent that Spake in Edin.' A second tablet, in the private collection of Dr. J. B. Nies, contained a similar record, reading



'Granary of the Field of the Serpent that Spake in Edin.' Edin, according to Mr. Skeat, was the name of the region wherein the Garden was planted, not the name of the Garden itself, as is so often supposed."

The other item reads: "Writing of the Meo tribespeople in their back highlands of French Indo-China, Mrs. Homer-Dixon says that their line runs back to the beginnings of the race. 'It is not uncommon at weddings or funerals for some elderly man to recite the entire genealogy of the family right back to the days of Genesis.' (Three progenitors in a century, thirty in a millennium, 180 in 6,000 years.) If any doubt this, let him read a booklet by E. A. Truax of the Christian Alliance in which appears the Meo story of the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel. The likeness to the Biblical account is extraordinary, the very name given the builder of the Ark being 'Nuah.' From the Tower of Babel the Meo trace their wanderings north, by way of Georgia (Russia) and the Caucasus, to a land of six months' snow, where day and night were each six months long (Siberia). A later emigration brought them into the Yangtze Valley, where they settled as the first inhabitants of the country. The Chinese, appearing later, drove them into the mountainous regions of Asia, including Tonkin and Northern Laos. They are monotheists with a high code of morals, punishing marital infidelity with death, and they are now being approached with the Gospel." The latter is a remarkable instance showing how ancient tradition among primitive tribes supports the Biblical records.  
J. T. M.

**Einstein's Atheism.**—The *Christian Beacon* (Sept. 19, 1940), quoting the *New York Times*, reports that Dr. Albert Einstein, before a conference, composed of Jews, Protestants, and Roman Catholics, which was held in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, recently "expounded his own atheism, which has been little known publicly and never before so emphatically stated." Starting with the thought that according to his belief "the main source of the present-day conflicts between the spheres of religion and of science lies in the concept of a personal God," he said (in part): "The more a man is imbued with the ordered regularity of all events, the firmer becomes his conviction that there is no room left by the side of this ordered regularity for causes of a different nature. For him neither the rule of human nor the rule of divine will exists as an independent cause of natural events. To be sure, the doctrine of a personal God interfering with natural events could never be refuted in the real sense of science, for this doctrine can always take refuge in those domains in which scientific knowledge has not yet been able to set foot. But I am persuaded that such behavior on the part of the representatives of religion would not only be unworthy but also fatal. For a doctrine which is able to maintain itself, not in clear light, but only in the dark, will of necessity lose its effect on mankind with incalculable harm to human progress. In their struggle for the ethical good, teachers of religion must have the stature to give up the doctrine of a personal God, that is, give up that source of fear and hope which in the past placed such vast power in the hands of priests. In their labors they will have to avail themselves of those forces which are capable of cultivating the good, the true, and the beautiful in humanity



itself. That is, to be sure, a more difficult but an incomparably more worthy task. Whoever has undergone the intense experience of successful advances in the domain of scientific thought is moved by profound reverence for the rationality made manifest in existence. By way of the understanding he achieves a far-reaching emancipation from the shackles of personal hope and desires and thereby attains that humble attitude of mind toward the grandeur of reason incarnate in existence, which in its profoundest depths is inaccessible to man. *This attitude appears to me to be religion in the highest sense of the word.*" (Italics our own.)

Writing editorially on this open plea for atheism, the *Christian Beacon* says: "When Fosdick's church, the Riverside Church in New York City, built with Rockefeller's money, was being completed, it was announced that Albert Einstein's face was being carved in the church. He was given a place along with other names which are famous. There was considerable talk in Christian circles about giving him such a place in a Christian church. He is an unsaved [unconverted] Jew. Now the world knows that Einstein is an out-and-out atheist. He does not believe, according to the announcement which was made in New York last week, in a personal God. He may know many things about relativity, but he knows nothing about God. The order which Dr. Einstein sees prevailing in the universe leaves no place for a divine personality. There is one paragraph, however, in Dr. Einstein's statement which is most interesting, for he indicates in this paragraph the place where divine revelation may enter his scientific world. He cannot receive it and therefore casts it out as even a possible consideration. He said: 'The doctrine of a personal God interfering with natural events could never be refuted in the real sense by science, for this doctrine can always take refuge in those domains in which scientific knowledge has not yet been able to set foot.' . . . Einstein has failed to examine the evidence of divine revelation which we have in the Bible. The appeal by men to such a revelation is not unworthy or futile, as Dr. Einstein alleges. As a matter of fact, it is only by the acceptance of such a revelation that man can understand the universe in which he lives, the establishment of the well-ordered universe, and the relationship of the almighty God to it revealed to us in the Bible. An understanding of the universe, its purpose and meaning, is not to be found in Dr. Einstein's theory of relativity but in the Word of God. God, through His precepts, has made me wiser than the ancients, was the testimony of the psalmist, and we have more understanding than all our teachers through the Word of God. How true the testimony of the Bible is: 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools!' 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.'"

To Einstein "religion in the highest sense of the word" is, after all, nothing else than what Positivism interpreted it to be years ago, namely, deification of reason, or intelligence, in the abstract, and of humanity in practical application. Here Comte and Einstein, two great modern thinkers of atheistic disposition, join hands and their final, superficial verdict on the greatest metaphysical problem proves how little human reason can be relied upon to serve as a standard of ethical and spiritual truth. "They became fools" is indeed right.

J. T. M.



**Burning Lutheran Churches in Australia.**—Repeatedly in recent times the *Australian Lutheran* reported the burning of Lutheran churches in Australia by fanatic pseudo-patriots. On the other hand, fair-minded friends of our brethren, very often in high places, have risen to denounce "the prevalent hooliganism that is responsible for the burning down of Lutheran churches." A fine editorial appeared not long ago in the *Ararat Advertiser*, which, referring to the burning of the Lutheran church at Willaura, a township adjacent to Ararat, said: "The burning of the Lutheran church at Willaura early on Sunday morning has caused a certain amount of indignation among residents of that peaceful township. If the act were deliberate, as it appears to have been, we may suppose that it was due to a form of pseudo-patriotism, which expresses itself in acts that cause embarrassment and pain to loyal citizens, without helping in any practical way a country which is engaged in a life-and-death struggle against Nazi Germany. A Christian church, whatever may be its particular denomination or dogma, is a symbol of the Christian ethic, a fundamental principle of which is that the weak have rights as well as the strong. . . . The Lutheran Church is the mother of Protestantism and for a long time has been the State Church of the peace-loving peoples of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. The ancestors of Germans now living in this district left Germany one hundred years ago to escape the rule of the Prussian Frederick William IV, who denied them the liberty of worship, for which they were willing to sacrifice a great deal. . . . It is easy to believe that the deliberate burning of a Lutheran church, if deliberate it was, was the act of irresponsibles, who are not far-seeing enough to realize that such an act only diverts the authorities from their real work of prosecuting the war, mulcts an insurance company of several hundreds of pounds, and has put the Government to the expense of sending two detectives to Willaura to investigate the cause of the fire, when they might be engaged in important national work. Every week hundreds of charges against disloyalties are being investigated. A large percentage of these are due solely to personal animus, yet patient inquiry and valuable time must be wasted because in an emergency like the present nothing can be left to chance. It is right that all citizens should be more than usually alert to detect subversive propaganda, sabotage, or deliberate acts of disloyalty. There is, however, a right and proper (and ultimately a more patriotic) way of dealing with such things, remembering the Prime Minister's warning in his speech announcing Australia's declaration of war that it would be a pity if, in winning this war, we should lose those things for which we are fighting."

The *Australian Lutheran* adds: "Possibly if there were more utterances of this kind in the public press and it were more generally known that the general public of Australia does not approve of these acts of sacrilege these manifestations of vandalism would not be as numerous as they have been." All of which reminds us of our duty and privilege of continued intercession for our afflicted brethren in the countries that are engaged in war.

J. T. M.



**The Religious Situation in Spain.**—In an article appearing in the *Christian Century* David Lord, Director of the Spanish Institute, an international organization, who for many years lived in Mexico, gives a vivid description of the state of affairs in Spain with respect to religion. While that country is Roman Catholic to the core, interest in religion is at a very low ebb. Some time ago Cardinal Goma, archbishop of Toledo, primate of Spain, is said to have issued a pastoral letter, which the Franco government did not permit to circulate because the picture of conditions as they now exist in Spain was considered too depressingly gloomy. A few sentences from this suppressed pastoral are quoted, for instance, the following: "We do not need to affirm that Catholicism within Spain has been in a state of decayedness for a long time. We are not speaking of the present feverish times but of the slow, continuing movement toward indifference." The cardinal is said to admit that in some districts "only five per cent. of the men and twenty per cent. of the women can be counted among the faithful." Other significant statements of his are these: "It is necessary to wipe out, above all, the absurd ignorance of religion found in our country. I call it absurd because no country can afford to be as ignorant of Christ and His religion as we are." A decree of the Government is quoted which commands parents to see to it that their children attend church. The decree states: "The teachers of the national schools are ordered to turn into the primary school administration a list containing the names and addresses of children who do not attend church in order that their parents may be imprisoned. The officials and teachers of the schools of the New Spain are required to carry out these precepts. In the event they fail to do so, prison terms commensurate with their crimes will be meted out, and they will be placed on bread and water for a period of forty days." Not only is it a far cry from the situation obtaining in Spain today to religious liberty, but that country is suffering from something worse than lack of religious freedom—spiritual atrophy. A.

**The Soviet's Atheistic Plan** is gradually breaking down. In the first flush of its arrogance it closed the churches and martyred the clergy and the faithful. Later it sensed the need of education to enforce its decrees. Still later it complained that the religious were stubborn and very inconsiderate of the Soviet's patience and generous attempts to enlighten them. The Soviet's latest pronunciamento, however, is a virtual confession of defeat and a formal capitulation. *Pravda*, the chief organ of the Soviet's Central Committee, recently announced that no campaign will henceforth be directed "against ministers and Rabbis, nor will administrative pressure be used to fight religion." There is, however, a subtle rider attached to this capitulation: "Our new policy is based on the simple fact that, when people are economically well provided for, then they do not look for aid from heaven. . . . True followers of Lenin and Stalin must realize that religious prejudices are built on a materialistic basis, which actually means that one is apt to be religious when one does not feel well on earth." The Soviet, therefore, intends to see that those citizens "who are religiously inclined should have their economic situation improved to the point where they will feel that



it is the Soviet, not any god, who is helping them." In some ways this is a more serious menace than persecution ever came to be; but material security, based on a manufactured national prosperity, has always been a sorry reed on which to lean. Soviet reasoning really describes the foundation of faith, especially our own.—*The Lutheran*.

**The Icy Blasts of Modernism in Ceylon.**— Under this heading *Christianity Today* (Vol. 10, No. 3) publishes an article in which the writer shows how Modernism is doing its injurious work also in far-away pagan Ceylon, which boasts a population of over five million, with nearly three million Buddhists, some nine hundred thousand Hindus, about three hundred thousand Mohammedans, and about five hundred thousand Christians, "mostly nominal," of whom over three hundred thousand are Roman Catholics. Modernism shows itself active first in its antichristian teaching. The article says: "The new preaching of an emasculated Gospel is now the main theme and the rostrum on which most preachers have taken their stand. This new preaching excludes the conviction of sin and repentance from the scheme of salvation; it demands from the sinner a mere intellectual assent to the fact and sufferings of Christ's atonement. Herein lies the whole trouble; in truth, you might word it, the landslide of souls to perdition." Over against this weakening of the Christian forces there has been of late an aggressive awakening on the part of the Buddhists. "With the spirit of nationalism now sweeping through the land, there has been a renaissance of Buddhist teaching, and their religious activities have been aroused. There are now Buddhist Sunday-schools scattered throughout the island. They hold special conferences. Buddhist tracts are freely distributed, in English and Singhalese, in hospitals, jails, and at their own roadside meetings, which are conducted by Buddhist laymen and priests. This is what Christianity has to face today.

But the Christian forces in Ceylon do not recognize the danger in which Christian missions find themselves at this juncture. The article continues: "The second blast of Modernism is the resort to carnivals, vanity fairs, beer bars run under the guise of milk bars, and all-night dancing parties held for the purpose of raking in shekels in aid of dwindling church funds and for the purchase of equipment. These carnivals have shocked all true Christians and made the Church a laughing-stock of the non-Christians, who point derisively to the paragraphs in the vernacular press and ask: 'Is this the religion of Christ?' One of them said: 'You will never dream of seeing such things done on the premises of a Mohammedan mosque or a Buddhist temple.' Yes, there was dancing till the dawn of a Sabbath morning, and drinking, too! What a spectacle to the heathen world to see girls in the clasp of half-inebriated men whirling to the tune of jazz in the name of the Christian Church! A few days after these Bacchanalian festivities there came off from the printing-press of a Buddhist a gaudily colored picture of the Christian Church under the caption 'The Church Has One Foundation,' showing a church built on an imposing array of beer barrels, bottles of whiskey, and gin. This is no doubt a dark picture of the down-



fall of the Church, and these lines are written with a heavy heart. This sad drift has brought sorrow to the hearts of all true believers. What account to God can the pastors, elders, and members of such churches give?" Indeed, a modern illustration for Rom. 2:24! J. T. M.

**Moslem Rebukes Tambaram Conference.** — Under this heading *Christianity Today* (Spring Number, 1940) reports: "The *United Church Review* (India) in a recent issue quotes an article written by a Moslem in the Mohammedan magazine the *Light*, in which he comments as follows on this conference: "The whole conference split itself into a number of committees to discuss the Christian solution of the problems which are now agitating the human mind, such as War, Nationalism, Capitalism, Socialism, Racism, Dictatorship, Democracy, and so on. The resolutions of these committees have been published. They are lengthy and long-winded. Those who have gone through them would know that what is called Christian solution is not Christian at all. *I say this because none of them have been fortified with any quotation from the Gospels.* [Italics in original.] It is hardly necessary for me to state here that, whenever a Muslim offers the Islamic solution of a problem, he bases it on a Quranic verse or Hadis." This is indeed a deserved reproof of the unbiblical spirit prevailing at Tambaram, which did not permit the acknowledgment of Scripture as the sole source and rule of faith. The Tambaram Conference was largely modernistic. What a pity that a Mohammedan seems to know more about Christianity than did the modernistic leaders at Tambaram! J. T. M.

**Brief Items.**—According to press reports Sir Oliver Lodge, a believer in spiritism, who recently died, made provision for establishing that in spite of having died he still lives. A sealed envelope with a message nobody but he himself knows was deposited with friends. He intends to reveal at a *séance* what that message is, and if his "revelation" agrees with what has been placed into the secret envelope (which will then be opened), proof for his continued existence has been furnished, he said. Will people be misled by such a delusion?

A Yale research fellow, Dr. Efron, announces that he has found a key for the large numbers in the genealogical table of Gen. 5. Methuselah in reality got to be only 192 years old, Adam died at the age of 96, etc. This key is "a tree-shaped symbol which has been found carved in rocks and in other records of the ancient world." In the branches, their position, length, and thickness, a certain code is represented, Dr. Efron maintains. One cannot help thinking of Rom. 1:22: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

From Japan comes the report that three Episcopalian bishops who are British subjects have been forced to resign. There are three other bishops there, who are Americans. We are told that the Japanese Episcopalian bishops have told the government that these three men will likewise quit their position. The government intends to see to it that all positions of this nature are filled by natives. It is the spirit of nationalism which is at work in this affair.

Oxford, through death, lost a prominent scholar, James Vernon Bartlet. His field was church history.



A statement by Dr. W. G. Friedrich of Valparaiso University contains these sentences pertaining to his school, which should receive wide currency: "Valparaiso courses differ from others only in that they are taught by professors who share the Christian faith of their students and who endeavor to strengthen this faith. These professors, by the way, are highly trained specialists, who have earned advanced degrees at distinguished universities. Examine the academic records of our faculty members (they are given in the university catalog), and you will see why Valparaiso is extremely proud of its faculty. The training of our faculty and the quality of our instruction have been recognized by five accrediting bodies, among them the North Central Association and the New York Board of Regents. Students who come to Valparaiso come to a fully accredited university." Professor Friedrich wrote these words as acting president. On October 6 the new president of the school, Prof. O. P. Kretzmann, was installed. Our best wishes go to him, to his colleagues, and to the whole school.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt recently was taken to task for her membership in the American Newspaper Guild, which is charged with manifesting Communist tendencies. Mrs. Roosevelt has told the critics that from now on she will take an active part in Guild affairs and do what she can to see that a proper course is followed. Commenting on this, the *Christian Century* (an interdenominational religious weekly) says: "The incident brings up the whole question of personal responsibility for collective commitments. . . . Unless one can bear an active part in such movements, it is probably better to eschew all commitments. This applies to membership in all organizations, including the Christian Church." Quote this to lodge-members who excuse their retention of membership in the respective organization by saying that they never attend the meetings.

A bill is before Congress ordering the purchase of Old Swedes Church, Philadelphia (Gloria Dei), in order to make it a national shrine. It was built by Lutheran Swedes in 1700 and now belongs to the Protestant Episcopal denomination. The church is very well preserved.

In Canada a sect called "British Social Federation" is being talked of just now. The promoters declare that according to the Bible the promises given by God to Israel have been inherited by the British people. Where the Bible speaks of warfare with the "beast," they hold it is foretold that Great Britain will have to fight single-handed, but will achieve the victory. Where people will not believe the truth, God lets strong errors arise in punishment of indifference.

The facile pen of a brother, Pastor H. C. Fricke of Arlington Heights, Ill., has written a play called *The Family Altar*. In an appealing way it stresses the necessity and value of joint devotions in the home. Copies may be procured at 25 cents by writing to Mrs. John W. Busse, 549 S. Evergreen Ave., Arlington Heights, Ill. A.

